Negative growth of apparel exports

♦347. SHRI NARESH GUJRAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that apparel exports are showing a negative growth of 13 per cent as against a positive growth of 32 per cent in 2005-06;

(b) whether Government is also aware that 6.8 lakh workers have lost their jobs in this sector in the current year; and

(c) if so, what fiscal steps Government is taking to arrest this trend considering the fact that the rupee has hardened by over 15 per cent against foreign currency?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) During April, 2007 to February, 2008, exports of Ready Made Garments of Cotton including accessories and Ready Made Garments of manmade fibres have shown a negative growth of 13.37% and 27.51% in rupee terms respectively.

(b) Government has received reports from various sources regarding job losses in several sectors including textiles, carpet, handicraft, leather, engineering, etc.

(c) To provide relief to the exporting community affected by rupee appreciation, the following steps have been taken:

(i) Enhancement of Duty Entitlement Pass Book Scheme (DEPB) rates;

(ii) Enhancement of Duty Drawback Rates;

(iii) Reduction of ECGC premia rates;

(iv) Provision of subvention of 2% in the rate of interest on pre and post shipment credit in respect of all exporters from SME sector and 13 other sectors and additional subvention of 2% in respect of leather and other manufacturers, marine products, all categories of textiles including Ready Made Garments and Carpets but excluding Man made Fibres, and Handicrafts till 31.03.08. During the year 2007-08, Rs. 300 Crores has already been released to Reserve Bank of India to enable them to reimburse the amount of interest subvention by the scheduled commercial banks.

(v) Accelerated reimbursement of terminal excise duty and central sales tax to exporters;

(vi) Provision to pay interest on Exchange Earners Foreign Currency (EEFC) accounts of exports on outstanding balances subject to a maximum of USS 1 million;

(vii) Refund of Service Tax (re&nd) for exports in respect of certain services;

(viii) Reduction of custom duty on select textile materials;

(ix) Under Annual Supplement to Foreign Trade Policy 2004-09, announced on 11/04/2008, the following additional reliefs have been provided to sectors like textiles and graments affected by rupee appreciation:

(a) Interest subvention provided last year to sectors affected by rupee appreciation and to SMEs, has been extended by one more year. It is likely that Rs. 1050 Crores will be provided for this purpose.

(b) Reduced average export obligation under EPCG, for sectors which have witnessed decline in exports in the previous year.

(c) Provision of payment of interest for delays in re-imbursement of Terminal Excise Duty and Central Sales tax beyond 30 days from the date of approval.

Serial on freedom fighters

†*348. SHRI JAI PARKASH AGGARWAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to broadcast or produce any serial based on the biographies of prominent freedom fighters;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of the prominent freedom fighters based on whose biographies serials have been broadcast or produced during the last three years, till date , year-wise/Doordarshan Kendra-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Prasar Bharati have informed that serials based on the biographies of the prominent freedom fighters are telecast as per the calendar of the events/ anniversaries issued by the Government of India.

Recently, Doordarshan telecast a five episode s-vies on Bharat Ratna Late Lai Bahadur Shastri, a telefilm on Loknayak Jai Prakash Narayan and a programme on freedom fighter Birsa Munda. To celebrate the 150th Year of War of Independence and to pay tributes to martyrs and to the historical freedom struggle of India, Doordarshan presented a series of following programmes:

1. 'SWARAJNAMA' 13 Episodes programme presented by Dr. Girish Karnad.
2. 'BHARAT EK KHOJ' 53 Episodes by Film Maker Sh. Shyam Benegal.
3. 'SWARAJ' 34 Episodes by Smt. Manju Singh.
4. 'COLOURS OF FREEDOM', 16 Episodes by Film Maker Sh. Buddhadeb Dasgupta.
5. 'BHARTAYAN' in-house production of programmes.

Apart from the above, the programmes as given in the Statement *(See* below) have been telecast on Kendras/Channels of Doordarshan during the last three years.

Statement

Programmes telecast by Doordarshan Kendras/Channels of Doordarshan during the last three years.

Kendras	Programme
Ahmedabad	A weekly serial on freedom fighters, social reformers and about the socio-economic progress in different fields during the last 150 years.
Aizwal	(A) Discussion on the 150th year of first war of independence.

t Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.